THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) and (b) There is no proposal to raise a Kalinga Regiment in the Defence Forces. The policy of the Government is not to raise any new regiment on the basis of a particular class, creed, community, religion or region, but to have an Army in which all Indians have representation.

Occupation of land by Army

2402. PROF. SAIF-UD-DIN SOZ: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that the army has taken over lands at various places in baramula and Kupwara districts for defence purposes; and

(b) if so, whether Government are also aware that the army neither vacates these lands nor pays any rent?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) and (b) Apart from Defence acquired land, there are certain pockets of land, which are under occupation of Armed Forces in Baramulla and Kupwara Districts. The occupation Of land by Armed Forces is regularized by way of requisition/hiring and rental compensation is payable for such lands. The rentals for the requisitioned and hired lands are normally being paid when due. In Baramulla district, 2202.381 acres of land (approximately) is under requisition/hiring with Armed Forces for which a sum of Rs. 85,29,783/- has been paid as rentals in the year 2002-2003. Similarly, in Kupwara District, 1011.445 acres of land (approximately) is under requisiton/hiring with Armed Forces for which a sum of Rs. 34,22,120/- has been paid as rentals in the year 2002-2003.

Setting up of a Sainik Bharti board in Aheerwal Region of Haryana

†2403. SHRI D .P. YADAV: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether any action has been taken by Government to set up the proposed "Sainik Bharti Board" in the Aheerwal region of Haryana; and

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) if so, the details of the action taken; if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) Army authorities have informed that no proposal to set up Sainik Bharti Board at Aheerwal region of Haryana has been received.

(b) The question does not arise.

India's Request to US for Purchase of Patriot Missile System

2404. SHRI K. KALAVENKATA RAO: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether India has requested the US to sell to it Patriot Anti-Missile System and upgrade Arrow Missile Shield System; and

(b) if so, the reaction of the US thereto?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) and (b) A request for technical information on the Patriot anti-missile system has been sent to the Defence Cooperation Agency of the US government. The proposal is at a preliminary stage and a decision will be taken on receipt of evaluation of the technical information. There is no proposal to acquire and upgrade the Arrow Missile Shield System.

Time Spent by Indian Navy on the High Seas

2405. SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that in-house analysis of the Indian Navy has revealed that the Navy is not doing enough open ocean work and continuing itself only to the coasts of the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) steps the Ministry is taking or propose to take to direct Navy to spend much more time on high seas?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.